

Pteroceras teres (Orchidaceae). A new record for the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, India^a

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Abstract

Pteroceras teres, an epiphytic orchid, is reported from Campbell Bay National Park, Great Nicobar Island, and is a new addition to the orchid flora of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The species is briefly described and a photograph is provided. A key to the species occurring in these Islands is proposed.

Résumé

***Pteroceras teres* (Orchidaceae). Un taxon nouveau pour les Iles Andaman & Nicobar, Inde –** *Pteroceras teres*, orchidée épiphyte, a été découvert dans le Parc National de Campbell Bay, Grande Ile de Nicobar, ce qui constitue une addition à la flore des Iles Andaman & Nicobar. L'espèce est brièvement décrite et illustrée. Une clé d'identification des trois espèces enregistrées à ce jour sur ces Iles est proposée.

Introduction

The genus *Pteroceras* was established by J.Hasskarl in 1842. It belongs to subfamily Epidendroideae, tribe Vandaeae, subtribe Aeridinae. The genus comprises of 27 species worldwide and is widely distributed from northwestern Himalaya to the Philippines (Govaerts *et al.*, 2014, retrieved 11-02-2014). In India, the genus is represented by five species (Misra, 2007;

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Punekar, 2009). All species belonging to the genus are epiphytes characterised by monopodial short pendulous stems. The leaves are distichous, flat, jointed and with an amplexicaul-sheathing at base, the apex usually being unequally bilobed. The flowers are characterised by the lip being dominated by a spur pointing forward in line with the columnfoot, and connected to that foot by a movable joint.

While working towards an inventory of the floristic diversity of Campbell Bay National Park, the largest among the nine National Parks of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, an epiphytic orchid was collected from the inland evergreen forests on the eastern slopes of the Great Nicobar Island (Fig. 1). About 10-15 individuals were found in cluster on the branches of a tree in that area. The species was identified as *Pteroceras teres* (Blume) Holttum. Hitherto, only two species belonging to the genus *Pteroceras* namely, *P. muriculatum* (Hort. ex Reichenbach f.) P.F.Hunt and *P. unguigulatum* (Lindley) H.A.Pederson were known from the Andaman & Nicobar Islands (Vasudeva Rao, 1986; Pandey & Diwakar, 2008). The present collection from the Campbell Bay National Park forms a new addition to the orchid flora of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands. A brief description and illustrations are provided to identify this species in wild.



Fig. 1. Location map of *Pteroceras teres* in Great Nicobar Island

- Key to the *Pteroceras* species occurring in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands**
- 1a. Flowers over 4 cm across; sepals & petals white to pale yellow, without markings; lip distinctly clawed ----- *P. unguiculatum*
1b. Flowers less than 2 cm across; sepals & petals white to yellow, with markings; lip obscurely clawed-----2
- 2a. Spikes up to 10 cm long; sepals & petals white with purple stripes-----
----- *P. muriculatum*
- 2b. Spikes up to 20 cm long; sepals & petals yellow with reddish-maroon spots----- *P. teres*

Taxonomic description

Pteroceras teres (Blume) Holttum, *Kew Bulletin* 14: 271 (1960); C.A. Baker & R.C. Bakhuizen van den Brink, *Flora of Java* 3: 412 (1968); G.Seidenfaden, *Opera Botanica* 95: 254 (1988); J.B.Comber, *Orchids of Java* 310 (1990); G.Seidenfaden, *Opera Botanica* 114: 430 (1992); J.B.Comber, *Orchids of Sumatra* 868 (2001); N.R.Pearce & P.J.Cribb, *Orchids of Bhutan* 548 (2002); S.Z.Lucksom, *Orchids of Sikkim North East Himalaya* 870, t. 520 (2007).

Synonyms:

Dendrocolla teres Blume, *Bijdragen tot de flora van Nederlandsch Indië* 289 (1825).

Thrixspermum teres (Blume) Reichenbachfil., *Xenia Orchidacea* 2: 121 (1867).

Aerides suaveolens Roxburgh, *Flora Indica* ed. 1832, 3: 473 (1832).

Sarcochilus suaveolens (Roxburgh) Hookerfil., *Flora of British India* 6: 33 (1890); B.Grant, *Orchids of Burma* 305 (1895).

Pteroceras suaveolens (Roxburgh) Holttum, *Kew Bulletin* 14: 271 (1960).

Type: Java, Buitenzorg, Blume 744 (holo. L).

Epiphytic herbs. Stems pendulous, up to 15 cm long. Leaves oblong to lanceolate, 5-1 × 1.5-2 cm, sessile, bilobed at apex, jointed at base, leathery. Inflorescences racemose, more than three, pendulous, up to 30 cm long, leaf-opposed; peduncle glabrous, 2-5-flowered at a time, up to 15-20 flowers, terete, with few ovate bracts. Bracts minute, lanceolate, greenish-white. Flowers ca. 1.5 cm across, yellow with reddish–maroon spots in sepals and petals; pedicel and ovary terete, pale yellow. Sepals sub-equal; dorsal sepal obovate to elliptic, ca. 8 × 4 mm, obtuse at apex; lateral sepals spreading, obovate, ca. 8.5 × 4 mm, truncate to broadly rounded at apex.

Petals obovate, ca. 8 × 2.8 mm, obtuse at apex. Lip ca. 7 mm long, white, jointed to the foot of the column, spurred, 3-lobed; side lobes small, oblong, blunt and erect; midlobe with a ridge like callus, surface slightly papillose. Spur funnel-shaped, dark purple at the tip. Column ca. 1 mm long, reddish-brown, slightly dilated towards the apex; anther cap depressed, 0.5 mm wide, 2 celled; pollinia 2, deeply cleft, with stipe 0.8 mm long. Capsules not seen (Figs. 2 & 3).



Fig. 2. *Pteroceras teres* (Blume) Holttum - Habit and view of flowers
(ph. J.Jayanthi)

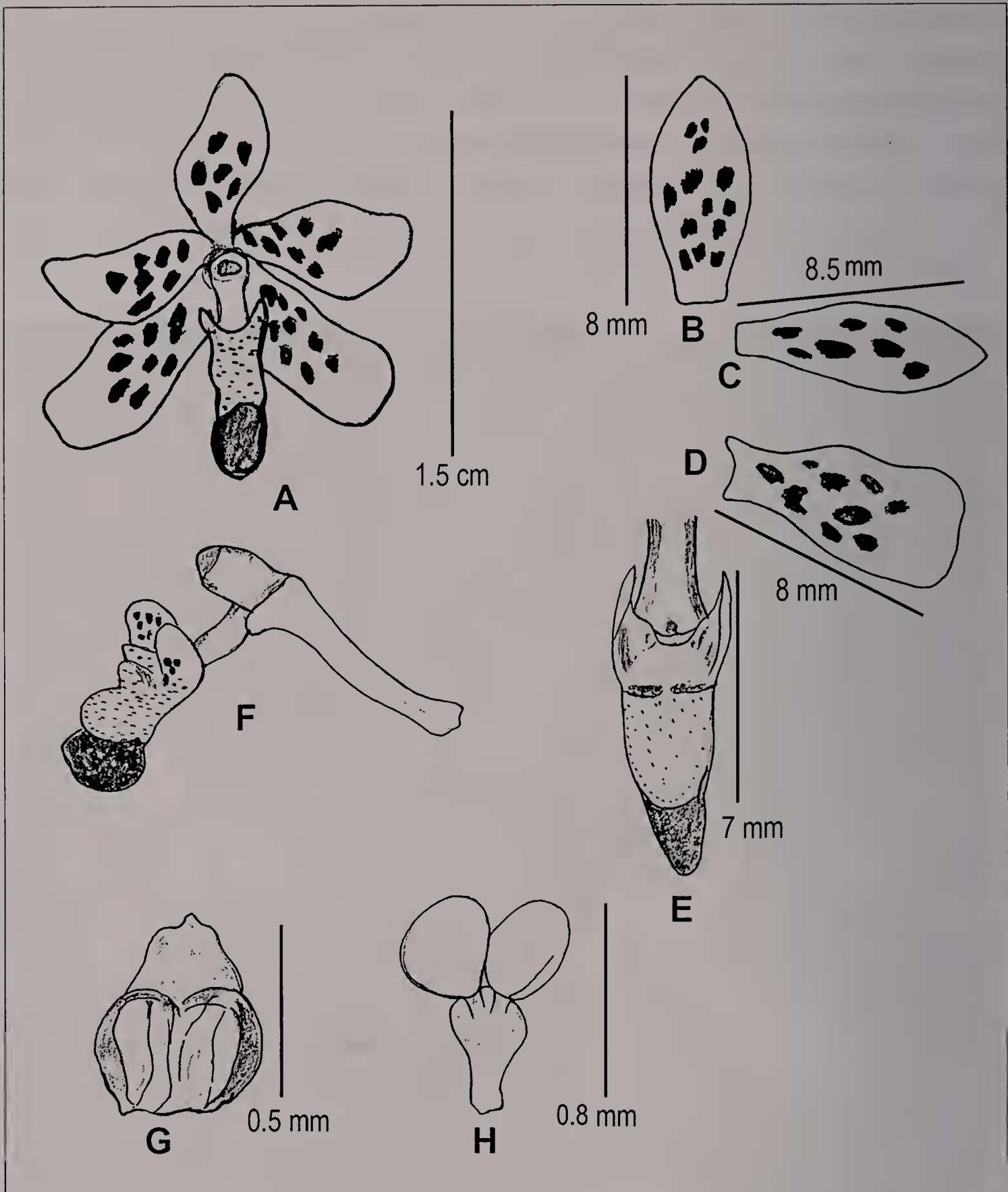


Fig. 3. *Pteroceras teres*

A. flower, B. dorsal sepal, C. lateral sepal, D. petal, E. lip, F. lip with column, G. anther cap, H. pollinia (Drawn by J.S.Jalal)

Flowering: January – February.

Habitat: Found in the low hill evergreen forest along flowing water near Navy Dera.

Specimen examined: INDIA, Nicobar Islands, Great Nicobar, Campbell Bay National Park, Navy Dera, Elev.: 100-200 m, Jayanthi 19419 (PBL).

Distribution: India (Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Nagaland, Great Nicobar Island); Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Borneo, Java, Sumatra, Moluccas, Philippines and Sulawesi.

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